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Tuesday, 22 June 2004, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mrs. Albert	(Philippines)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Baali
	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Benin	Mr. Aho-Glele
	Brazil	Mr. Sardenberg
	Chile	Mr. Muñoz
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	France	Mr. Duclos
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Pakistan	Mr. Khalid
	Romania	Mr. Motoc
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	Spain	Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Thomson
	United States of America	Mr. Holliday

Agenda

Role of civil society in post-conflict peace-building

Letter dated 1 June 2004 from the Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2004/442)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

04-39844 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Role of civil society in post-conflict peace-building

Letter dated 1 June 2004 from the Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2004/442)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Egypt, Ireland, Japan, Nepal, Peru, the Republic of Korea, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Uganda, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Ms. Marjatta Rasi, President of the Economic and Social Council.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite the President of the Economic and Social Council to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Denis Caillaux, Secretary-General of CARE International.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite the Secretary-General of CARE International to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Ian Martin, Vice-President of the International Center for Transitional Justice.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite the Vice-President of the International Center for Transitional Justice to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations. I should like to draw attention to document S/2004/442, which contains a letter dated 1 June 2004 from the Permanent Representative of the Philippines addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a background paper on the role of civil society in post-conflict peace-building.

In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate the texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

As another measure to optimize the use of our time in order to allow as many delegations as possible to take the floor, I will not individually invite speakers to take seats at the table and invite them to resume their seats at the side of the Chamber. When a speaker is taking the floor, the conference officer will seat the next speaker on the list at the table.

Our topic today focuses on an important segment of global society whose role is increasingly felt by most people in post-conflict situations. Since peace-building is an important mandate of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security, the Philippine presidency deems it appropriate that we focus our debate on how the Security Council could harness the participation of civil society organizations in post-conflict peace-building. We have

distributed a concept paper on this issue, contained in document S/2004/442. I should like to invite all speakers to address the questions we have set out in the concept paper.

I welcome the presence of the distinguished Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, and invite him to take the floor.

The Secretary-General: Madam Minister and President, let me start by saying how pleased we are to see you in our midst today and to congratulate you and your delegation on organizing this timely debate. Given its subject, I am very glad that civil society representatives will participate in it.

The partnership between the United Nations and civil society has grown considerably in recent years. That reflects the increasing role of civil society in helping to shape and scrutinize government policies and in holding Governments accountable. It also reflects the need, in an era marked by both global integration and State fragmentation and failure, for civil society to contribute to international decision-making.

Of course, civil society actors come in all shapes and sizes. Many make outstanding contributions to peace. Others, which I have in the past called "uncivil society", are drivers of conflict. If peace-building missions are to be effective, they should, as part of a clear political strategy, work with and strengthen those civil society forces that are helping ordinary people to voice their concerns and to act on them in peaceful ways. By the same token, they should seek to reduce the influence of forces that promote exclusionary policies or encourage people to resort to violence.

The aim must be to create a synergy with those civil society groups that are bridge-builders, truth-finders, watchdogs, human rights defenders and agents of social protection and economic revitalization. That can build reconciliation and lessen the appeal of those who might try to reignite conflict. It can help ensure that national and international actors are held accountable. It can assist in building national consensus on the design of post-conflict structures and programmes. It can help prepare local communities to receive back demobilized soldiers, refugees and internally displaced persons, and it can give a voice to the concerns of the marginalized. That is why there should be a two-way dialogue between the United Nations and civil society, not so that one can direct the other but to ensure that our efforts complement one another.

However, we should not see civil society groups as peace-building partners only after we have arrived in a country with a mandate in our pockets. On the contrary, civil society organizations, local as well as international, have a role to play in the deliberative processes of the Organization, including the Council. In recent years, civil conflicts and complex emergencies have taken centre stage in the work of the Council. That has deepened the need for the Council to have a real understanding of the places and situations in which it is engaged. I believe that Council members can benefit from the expertise, focus and insight which civil society groups bring to the table. I therefore welcome the efforts the Council has made to strengthen its informal relations with civil society groups. But the time may have come for the Council to deepen its dialogue with them and to place its relations with them on a firmer footing.

Here I would ask the Council to pay serious attention to the report released yesterday by the high-level Panel on United Nations relationships with civil society. I am extremely grateful to the Panel members and to all who contributed to the report. Its recommendations are practical and forward-looking. We in the Secretariat are studying them carefully. I trust that the members of the Council — and, indeed, all Member States — will do the same.

I am particularly pleased that the Panel has proposed a number of concrete measures to increase the participation of civil society representatives from developing countries, and the report offers many innovative ideas to strengthen the partnership with civil society in our humanitarian and development work.

The report also has a number of practical suggestions on how the Security Council might engage more effectively with civil society, ranging from making better use of the Arria formula, to holding seminars on issues of emerging importance, to convening independent commissions of inquiry after Council-mandated operations.

The Security Council is, of course, a Council of sovereign Governments dealing with the most sensitive matters of war and peace. It should view the input of civil society organizations not as an attempt to usurp the role of Governments but, rather, as a way to add

quality and value to its decisions and to help ensure that they will be effectively implemented.

I would like to remind the Council that many civil society organizations — not just from the North, but also from the South; and not just international, but also local — have shown that they can make a real contribution to the work of the United Nations in peace and security. I therefore have high hopes for the international conference on conflict prevention which civil society groups have decided to hold next year in response to the recommendation in my 2001 conflict-prevention report.

Engagement with civil society is not an end in itself, not is it a panacea, but it is vital to our efforts to turn the promise of peace agreements into the reality of peaceful societies and viable States. The partnership between the United Nations and civil society is therefore not an option; it is a necessity. I hope that, through this debate, the Council will be able to develop more comprehensive and concrete strategies for strengthening its partnership with civil society.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his timely, important and encouraging statement, as well as for his support for the theme that we have adopted during our presidency. I thank him also for his kind words of welcome.

I give the floor to the President of the Economic and Social Council, Ms. Marjatta Rasi.

Ms. Rasi: I would like to thank the Security Council President for the initiative to bring to light the important role that the civil society can play in post-conflict societies. I am very pleased to take part in this debate in my capacity as President of the Economic and Social Council.

There are different perspectives on the role of the civil society, whether we refer to non-governmental stakeholders, whose efforts complement the work of international organizations and of Governments, or whether we analyse the contribution of local actors, which contribute to the peace-building process. All these dimensions are very well reflected in the concept paper provided by the President. I can touch upon only some of the questions from the perspective of the Economic and Social Council and in terms of development concerns.

If we take a look at certain areas to which the United Nations and the Security Council itself have attached importance in their activities, we find that civil society organizations (NGOs) are increasingly an indispensable partner. I could mention rehabilitation and reintegration at the local level, human rights, the rule of law, health and other social programmes, physical infrastructure, and the environment. The non-governmental organizations help to implement demobilization programmes, protect children from involvement in armed conflict, and confront problems caused by landmines.

United Nations agencies and other multilateral organizations are often called upon to assume wide responsibilities in relation to international cooperation for relief and development assistance. NGOs are significant actors in crisis and post-crisis situations. Their number, diverse mandates and varying operational capacities make coordination essential to ensure the coherence and impact of their combined efforts. Many donors rely on NGOs as channels for their assistance, and, in that function, they are expected to follow agreed policies and standards of behaviour. In violent conflicts, NGOs are the principal delivery vehicles, and other agencies, including the United Nations, rely on them as implementing partners.

NGOs thus face particular challenges, and international organizations and Governments should support them in their efforts. Necessary coordination between the actors can be improved through information exchange, regular consultations and joint needs assessments in the field. Transition from relief work towards post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation requires a shared understanding of the longer-term commitments.

Conflict networks between external governmental and non-governmental partners working on conflict-related issues facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experiences so as to enable them to act together in a more effective way. Donor coordination is a constant theme of Economic and Social Council deliberations.

Civil society institutions play a vital function in the reconciliation process and in building national consensus, and, through them, key social, religious, professional and political interest groups are included. A space is needed for civil society actors to participate and to play a peace-building role. The media can serve as a social educator to defuse potential conflicts. The protection of human rights is vital in a vulnerable post-conflict society. A diversified civil society means

reducing destabilization and bolstering support for State institutions, so that peace-building efforts and economic and social development can progress.

Lack of resources and capacity hinders reconstruction efforts, and adequate assistance is required for post-conflict needs, including fostering civil society. Effective local capacity-building should be supported across sectors and communities as well as a wide range of civil society organizations. External donor strategies always need to keep in perspective the broader context and the specificity of a post-conflict situation and the appropriate roles of the various actors.

The importance of civil society in preventing conflicts should also be part of our discussion, as it is another dimension of the conflict-related work of the United Nations. Early understanding of a potential outbreak of conflict requires that we understand its signals. Again, we should encourage networks with the capacity to analyse, monitor and share information. Collaboration among Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations would enhance the ability to create an early response. To that end, assisting in the development of regional civil society networks is therefore worth considering. However, the deeper causes of conflicts require a long-term preventive focus and addressing the basic conditions of socio-economic development and poverty.

Transition and development are receiving greater attention in the activities of the Economic and Social Council. Recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction are regularly discussed with the humanitarian and operative agencies. The Economic and Social Council is uniquely placed to interact and consult with civil society at the United Nations. Likewise, the Council's various subsidiary bodies — the functional commissions — have established close contacts with non-governmental organizations and with other private entities to hear their views on the topics that the intergovernmental bodies are addressing. Earlier this year, for instance, the Commission on the Status of Women adopted conclusions on women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and resolution and in post-conflict peace-building, which is undoubtedly relevant to today's topic.

As a concrete example, the Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on Guinea-Bissau and on Burundi have engaged with civil society organizations in their efforts to consolidate peace-building with international support in the societies of those countries. A dialogue with civil society has been introduced to United Nations development activities as a basic principle. In addition, the World Bank, in its evolving post-conflict agenda, recognizes that the dynamics of civil society in countries affected by conflict pose a particular challenge.

Once again, Madam President, I welcome your initiative to have this exchange of views to find synergies among the main bodies of the United Nations. Creating conditions for sustainable development and for protecting the vulnerable who suffer from violent conflicts are our common tasks. Neither the United Nations nor Governments can accomplish them alone.

The President: I thank the President of the Economic and Social Council for her statement and for welcoming the theme of the role of civil society, especially in the reconciliation process and in building national consensus in peace-building, which we also consider to be a timely subject.

I shall now give the floor to Mr. Denis Caillaux, Secretary General of CARE International.

Mr. Caillaux (*spoke in French*): I should like to thank the Government of the Philippines for having invited CARE International to address the Security Council today and for having organized this debate on the role of civil society in post-conflict peace-building following the numerous and sad conflicts that characterize the present day. Such an initiative attests to the strength of our Governments' commitment — and that of the communitarian organizations based in the Philippines, whose activities are well known — to this topic.

(*spoke in English*)

I would also like to pay tribute to the trailblazers in civil society and peace-building — the women's groups and child rights advocates — to whom we may credit a number of the Council's historic resolutions mandating their protection and participation in peacekeeping efforts. I congratulate the Council on that body of law, and I urge members to ensure compliance on the ground.

Two days ago, I returned from a mission to Sudan, where I had visited villages exhausted by

decades of war but newly invigorated by the peace talks that are resuming today in Kenya under the formidable mediation of General Lazaro Sumbeiywo. One truth struck me as I visited community after community: for peace-building to be successful, we must all pause and imagine the daily struggles and aspirations of ordinary citizens seeking a life free from conflict and violence. Most of these individuals cannot read or afford a transistor radio, yet there is so much they need to learn about the peace process. For these post-conflict civilians, there will first be a need for basic security, landmine clearance and the predictable capacity to grow enough food, collect enough clean water, have access to basic health services and care for and educate their children. At the very same time, there will be a need to restore trust with their neighbours and participate in the creation of economic opportunities to absorb all the returning unemployed. And finally, there must be a systematic analysis of the conflict, mapping the constellation of causes, protagonists and victims in its terrible course.

When we speak about civil society, we include all groups of civilians not affiliated with the State, with the Government or with any armed faction. These include councils of elders, women's groups, farmers' associations and religious communities. Even amid the ruins of failed States, these local organizations have a profound stake in achieving the secure and rights-based society necessary to rebuild and govern their country. With the rise of internal armed conflicts and complex emergencies, we increasingly work with societies buffeted between armed conflicts and natural calamities, resulting in geographical patchworks of technical peace but actual insecurity.

The Council should be heartened by the remarkable progress in peace-building that civil society organizations have made in countries such as Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, Burundi and Afghanistan, where we work with myriad partners, including Governments, international non-governmental organizations, local civil society groups and, of course, United Nations agencies. Our approach is to design programmes that integrate basic activities with opportunities to engage people from opposing groups and build experience in preventing conflict through contact and communication.

In Côte d'Ivoire, following the waves of killing and retribution, we convened a meeting of the factions, including rival Christian and Muslim groups, giving them the responsibility to plan and manage the reconstruction. By engaging in that economic development process, those groups had many opportunities for face-to-face conversations that helped to cool the tensions from last year's violence.

In Sierra Leone — where peace is well under way — we adapted an agricultural programme to ensure food security for isolated communities, which integrated conflict resolution, human rights education and training in management skills.

Even in countries with long-running ethnic conflicts, communities with varying levels of stability can engage in positive peace-building activities. In Sri Lanka, for example, hundreds of households headed by women gathered for the first time to assert to local authorities their rights and needs. Concurrently, village committees in one region launched, in a one-day event, the largest distribution of birth certificates that they had ever achieved, reinforcing principles such as freedom of movement and the right of access to education and basic services.

The experience of civil society organizations in countries ranging from Cambodia to Bosnia and on to Afghanistan has shown that providing education — however informal — in emergencies stabilizes the community and protects children from the risk of being exploited or recruited into armed forces. In Afghanistan, under the Taliban and since, international non-governmental organizations, UNICEF, local organizations and village leaders promoted these goals by quietly educating thousands of girls and boys in village and home-based schools.

The Security Council and Member States face a new call to action based on a central lesson of peacekeeping and conflict-resolution efforts of the past decade. Tragically, many peace efforts falter from the outbreak of local conflicts. To prevent that from undermining national peace agreements, peacekeeping mandates must reach beyond their traditional focus, on the national level, to the heart of local communities.

As the Secretary-General has highlighted in his recent report on the protection of civilians (S/2004/431), local communities are under fire, literally, more than ever before, and the humanitarian workers seeking to help them have been attacked in greater numbers in places like the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Afghanistan, the Middle East and Darfur.

Rising to these challenges, what specific steps can the Council take to empower civil society groups that are committed to genuine peace-building?

First, the Security Council should demonstrate its leadership in the form of a strong presidential statement, expressing its commitment to engage civil society representatives, including women and children, in all phases of peace processes. That statement could make the following recommendations: first, incorporate references to the protection and the participation of civil society into Council resolutions and reports of the Secretary-General on specific countries. Secondly, create "Arria-Plus" formulas for civil society consultations, in accordance with the Cardoso Panel's findings. They would offer greater discussion and more regularity in scheduling.

A third recommendation could be to establish a civil society forum for each peace process that would formalize existing ad hoc consultative practices with civil society sectors during peace processes. This standing forum would provide expertise useful to United Nations personnel and others supporting negotiations, planning and implementation. Fourthly, institute the Arria formula in the field, in accordance with the Cardoso Panel's findings, to enable Security Council missions to consult more systematically with civil society experts in the field.

A fifth recommendation could be to institute a community observer programme for expert-level officers of Security Council member States, placing them with an operational non-governmental organization for one week in a country that they follow. That would strengthen Security Council decisions by providing first-hand exposure to the political and cultural context and the real life struggle of civilians rebuilding their lives. And sixthly, request the Secretary-General to submit an action plan to the Security Council, drafted with civil society participation, containing detailed guidelines for conducting comprehensive analysis of the origins, the dynamics and the actors related to each conflict.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General of Care for his expression of support for our theme. I also welcome the tribute he paid to trailblazers in civil society and peace-building, especially to women's groups and child rights advocates. I also note with interest his specific recommendations.

I now call on Mr. Ian Martin, Vice President of the International Center for Transitional Justice.

Mr. Martin: I would like to express appreciation to the Philippines presidency for deciding to highlight the role of civil society in post-conflict peace-building, and to the Council as a whole for taking another significant step in its openness to hearing directly from non-governmental organizations.

It is a particular privilege for the International Center for Transitional Justice to address the Council. Our Centre, which has offices in New York and Cape Town, assists countries confronting legacies of mass atrocity or human rights abuse. We are currently engaged with more than 20 countries, and we work closely with United Nations departments and agencies, especially in countries where the United Nations is engaged in post-conflict peace-building.

Above all, we work closely with local civil society partners. Notwithstanding the significant efforts of civil society organizations working internationally, the more important sector of civil society comprises the myriad national and local organizations that must often confront acute challenges of resources and security, particularly in post-conflict societies. Hearing their voices is more important, but more difficult, than hearing ours. Without purporting to speak for them, we can reflect something of the experience of our local partners and see it as the responsibility of international non-governmental organizations to create more opportunities for local voices to be heard.

It is no surprise that the initiative in considering the role of civil society should have come from the Philippines, a country renowned for having a vibrant, energetic and diverse civil society. In this context, we can certainly look to the Philippines for guidance and inspiration.

One of the most fundamental challenges of post-conflict peace-building is to confront the past while building a just foundation for the future. There is no one-size-fits-all approach, and in our work the International Center for Transitional Justice has learned a crucial lesson: whatever the answers are, they must emerge from or resonate within civil society.

Strategies to address past abuses generally include criminal prosecution of perpetrators of serious crimes; truth commissions; reparations packages,

including, but not limited to, financial compensation; efforts to honour the memory of victims; rigorous analysis of institutional culpability; efforts to reform institutions, including vetting of personnel; and reintegration and reconciliation initiatives.

These measures should be seen as complementary, not as alternatives, and a strategy should be debated and developed in a comprehensive manner. Alongside that strategy must be a parallel and related strategy for building the rule of law for the future, which the Council has recognized as crucial to peace-building.

Ideally, a democratic Government would set these strategies after a national debate and the fullest consultation with civil society, informed by international standards and best practices. In post-conflict reality, political leadership may be divided, fragile and of untested legitimacy, with the United Nations and the international community heavily involved in the decision-making, or, in extreme cases, bearing formal transitional authority. This reality may make it difficult, but also more vital, to engage civil society, as premature government or international decisions will prejudice success.

During the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), the establishment of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation was preceded by intense civil society debate, informed by international experience. As a result, the Commission not only reflects best practices from around the world, but incorporates a particularly successful innovation drawing on East Timorese tradition: community reconciliation processes involving the most local civil society, including traditional leaders.

In Sierra Leone, too, the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was preceded by public workshops and conferences, with strong civil society engagement, which helped incorporate policies relating to children, women and the involvement of traditional leaders in community reconciliation. In both East Timor and Sierra Leone, the selection of Commissioners was a transparent process with a central role for civil society.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, however, the prospects for a successful truth commission have been prejudiced by inappropriate political appointments, preceding reflection on the commission's role, and insufficient consultation with local civil society. In Liberia, too, the appointment of truth commission members has preceded any meaningful civil society engagement or legislative mandate, hindering the commission's progress.

Civil society engagement is equally essential for the success of other transitional justice measures. The ability of reparations to afford some satisfaction to victims is facilitated by victim and civil society participation in the design and implementation of programmes, while the mobilization of significant resources is likely to require the support of a broad coalition.

Prosecution of major perpetrators is, of course, a State responsibility, but it is sometimes only through the efforts of civil society and victim groups that the State is persuaded to act against impunity. Each successful prosecution concerning military responsibility for atrocities against civilians in Guatemala succeeded only because civil society carried out most of the relevant investigations and appeared in court on behalf of the victims. In Timor-Leste, civil society organizations are instrumental in ensuring that the emerging judicial system conforms to international standards of due process and in encouraging judicial independence. The Council should listen to civil society voices in Timor-Leste and Indonesia, and not only to Government views, regarding the unacceptable ongoing impunity of the major perpetrators of crimes against humanity in East Timor in 1999 and earlier.

Where prosecutions are proceeding, their intended contribution to restoring or establishing trust in the rule of law requires effective outreach into victim communities. The Special Court for Sierra Leone has been hugely assisted by local civil society organizations in its outreach. In Rwanda, the local showings and discussions of video recordings of perpetrator trials by a civil society organization have increased understanding in communities where victims and perpetrators now live together.

Efforts to build the rule of law have too often proceeded as if they are technical exercises to develop judicial, police and corrections systems according to external models. A rule-of-law strategy must be rooted in local conditions and developed with local civil society. Despite some positive examples, this is as yet a poorly developed aspect of rule-of-law peace-building.

The involvement of local and national civil society is not only helpful in designing more satisfactory approaches; it is irreplaceable if peace and justice are the goals. Yet there are challenges in securing broad, representative civil society participation. The most obvious partners may be those organizations with pre-existing capacity, while victim organizations may be non-existent or disempowered. Emphasis should be placed on capacity-building, on reaching out beyond the capital and particularly on the importance of involving women's organizations in all elements of peace-building. The direct participation of women in official institutions must be an explicit priority, but it is through civil society participation that women's contribution to peace-building can be more fully realized.

The direct access of civil society organizations to the Security Council can be valuable to both, and we welcome the recommendations of the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations-Civil Society Relations for enhancing such access. We strongly support the Panel's insistence that this should occur not only in New York, but whenever the Council goes on mission to post-conflict countries, where its members can be more accessible to local civil society organizations as well as to the local representatives of international non-governmental organizations. The voices of civil society must be heard when peace settlements are being negotiated and when missions to implement them are being planned and post-conflict needs assessed.

But the regular openness to civil society will depend on the peace-building missions and agencies in the field. There is a clear need to ensure that best practice is spread to missions that local civil societies do not currently perceive as open to their advice and involvement. The expectations that the Council conveys to the leaders of the missions it mandates and the extent to which it remains alert to the involvement of civil society are crucial to promote the effectiveness of the alliance between the United Nations and civil society, and thus the effectiveness of peace-building itself.

The President: I thank the Vice-President of the International Center for Transitional Justice for his kind words of support for our initiative. I also take this opportunity to thank him for recognizing the modest contributions of the Philippines civil society experience in facing challenges as we continue to build peace in our society.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Council.

Mr. Lucas (Angola): Madam President, I wish at the outset to welcome you and to express my delegation's appreciation to the Philippine delegation for convening this important meeting on the role of civil society in post-conflict peace-building. My delegation welcomes the participation of the Secretary-General and the President of the Economic and Social Council.

A word of praise goes to the representatives of civil society organizations invited to take part in this meeting. Their presence here is recognition of the important role played by civil society in international life — an importance acquired by their relationship with the Security Council and their potential for dynamic cooperation in the struggle for peace and international security.

The engagement of civil society in fulfilling the goals of the United Nations is steadily growing, as are the depth and quality of that commitment. It makes cooperation with civil society an essential element in strengthening the efficiency of the United Nations. By their intervention and commitment, civil society organizations have become a sort of moral reserve for the international community, filling a gap that defence of national interests by States is not always able to fill.

The concept paper proposed by the presidency to guide our work raises a number of questions that are self-explanatory on the important role that civil society and its organizations play in international life. Interesting changes have been taking place in the perception of Governments, particularly those facing post-conflict situations, of the role of civil society. That perception is evolving from deep distrust towards a better understanding of the potential and important role of civil society in education for peace and in basic activities of reconstruction and development leading to the establishment of solid partnerships.

In many countries, civil society organizations have become a niche where many women and men with social sensitivity can put into practice efforts and ideas for the common well-being. It is essential to ensure, in those circumstances, the full participation of those people in post-conflict peace-building.

The establishment of a climate of tolerance and respect for different views on alternative strategies to

strengthen peace and national reconciliation is a cornerstone for the participation of civil society in social processes. The Security Council, with its great authority, has an essential role to play in strengthening civil society in post-conflict situations by using its influence and striving for the establishment of such an environment of tolerance and democracy.

The studies produced by civil society organizations and the proposals they present are of great value in assisting the Security Council and its members in dealing with most critical and complex crisis situations. Over the years their presence on the ground has been instrumental in providing information on extremely grave situations that otherwise would have gone ignored. In many instances, it was the information and actions of non-governmental organizations that prompted the international community to act. A new partnership has emerged in which civil society and its organizations are crucial factors in the mobilization of national and world public opinion and in channelling that commitment to specific causes such as post-conflict peace-building, humanitarian relief, DDR, landmines and HIV/AIDS. In such contexts we stress as a landmark the role played by civil society in the international campaign for banning landmines, which lead to the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines.

In Angola, civil society and its organizations are playing an ever-increasing and decisive role in national reconciliation and peace-building. Civil society in Angola is steadily becoming a vibrant and powerful social force. Its organizations — local, national and international — now work in partnership with the Angolan Government in the consolidation of peace, the fight against poverty, demining, raising awareness of HIV/AIDS, the fight against epidemics, providing education and health, and in cooperating for the development of Angola. The partnership with civil society became a vital component of the efforts deployed by the Angolan Government and by Angolan society as a whole to overcome the wounds of war.

To conclude, I would like to say a word on regional approaches to post-conflict reconstruction and the role of civil society. The African Union has been engaged for many years with African civil society organizations by attaching great value to their role in the promotion of development and in fostering post-conflict peace-building. It is widely recognized that peace-building policies in Africa should encompass a comprehensive strategy that includes State institutions and civil society, acting in partnership, as a means to bestow ownership in the solution of very complex problems, such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; refugees and displaced persons; national reconstruction and long-term post-conflict reconciliation — issues that go well beyond Governments and the United Nations.

Finally, we seize this opportunity to commend the report of the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations-Civil Society Relations, released yesterday. It is our belief that the work of the Panel is of great importance for further improving the partnership between the United Nations and civil society in post-conflict peace-building. We hope that this meeting, which is taking place at a very timely moment, will contribute to establishing a solid conceptual and operational framework with a view to strengthening the relationship between the Security Council and civil society in the search for peace, reconciliation, justice and social progress.

The President: I thank the representative of Angola for his expression of support for our initiative, as well as his valuable comments on our concept paper on the role of civil society. He also cited the new partnership that is emerging between and among various stakeholders in national reconciliation and peace-building, especially as they relate to Africa.

Mr. Duclos (France) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I wish to thank you, Madam, for having organized today's debate on a novel and stimulating subject. This is a first insofar as the topic is concerned and because you have taken the initiative, for the first time in the history of the Council, to ask the representatives of two eminent non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to participate in our deliberations.

I should like to begin by taking this opportunity to pay a well-deserved tribute to the global non-governmental organizations, which have become the essential interlocutors of Governments, and to all NGOs — large and small, global and local, from the North and the South — that are now indispensable protagonists of human progress. I wish to pay a particular tribute to French NGOs, the "French doctors" and many others in all areas. My country, as

statist in its traditions as it is, is aware of the acclaim NGOs bring to France throughout the modern world.

Fortunately, our Council has informal working arrangements with the major NGOs represented in New York. I believe that such relations are productive and useful for three reasons.

First, many NGOs are engaged in the field and therefore have first-hand information and are sometimes the sole or the last presence in certain situations. This was the case, for example, in Liberia, certain parts of Côte d'Ivoire and Uganda.

Secondly, given their information sources on the ground, NGOs can play a valuable role in providing early warning. That was just recently the case in Darfur, where, together with the voice of our Secretary-General, it was Médecins sans Frontières and other NGOS that sounded the first alarm.

Thirdly, the legitimacy that accrues to NGOs from the involvement in the field in such areas as human rights violations, refugees and child soldiers sometimes allows them to assume the task of awakening consciences, which is of great importance in the contemporary world.

Is it possible or desirable for working relations between the Security Council and the NGOs represented in New York to be further extended? We can certainly make better use of the practice of holding Arria-formula meetings, preparing for them more assiduously and more frequently including representatives of local NGOs or of civil society. We believe, however, that we must avoid making such meetings more formalized, which would prove to be more cumbersome than beneficial.

Today's debate is also an opportunity to consider together the topic of the role of civil society and its representatives in post-conflict situations. We have heard the statements made earlier by the Secretary-General of CARE International and by Ian Martin. We believe that the conclusion to be reached is that, in a post-conflict period, the intervention of external protagonists and the imposition of external models are not sufficient. For instance, Ian Martin very clearly explained how delicate balances must be sought with respect to justice in the transitional period and the rule of law. This is not primarily a technical problem or an exclusively political problem; it is a social problem as well. We must rely on actors who can make progress; local civil society actors. The same can be said in the humanitarian sphere if lasting solutions are to be found; in the economic area if we are to find ways to ensure genuine recovery; and so on.

On that basis, is it possible to define a strategy of alliance between the United Nations and civil society actors in peace-building? My delegation feels that such is the course we must adopt. We must move forward cautiously, yet begin to think about this. I say "cautiously", first, because we must respect the initiative and independence of civil society organizations themselves; secondly, because one must in this regard prioritize the case-by-case approach and it is thus difficult to establish general rules; and thirdly, because the Security Council is merely one actor among others in the United Nations in this realm. It is clear, for instance, that the Economic and Social Council can provide an especially useful forum in this regard. On that very topic, we await with interest the result of its forthcoming discussion of the transition between the post-conflict humanitarian and development phases.

Within the parameters of the precautions I have cited, I believe that some thought can be given to certain elements of strategy. This can be done most specifically. I shall not refer to all of the proposals put forward by delegations. If members wish to see ours, they are available in the written text of my statement. These proposals can be clustered under certain headings representing potential elements of an alliance strategy between the United Nations and civil society actors.

The first element of this strategy would be to identify more specifically the points at which peace-building must necessarily mobilize civil society, for example, as concerns the role of private enterprise in reintegrating ex-combatants, or civic campaigns to prepare for elections.

Secondly, we must strengthen communication in both directions, between representatives of civil society and United Nations authorities in the field. As regards the Security Council, this can be done within peacekeeping operations. Here I agree with what Mr. Caillaux said. One might even envisage one day a cross-cutting resolution that would develop such communication in our peacekeeping operations.

The third strategic element is for representatives of civil society to associate themselves earlier on with

the policies that have been laid down by the United Nations. For example, representatives of the economic circles of the country involved might attend donor conferences.

The fourth element of strategy would be to involve civil society more closely in implementing United Nations reconstruction efforts. Here, also, you will find in my paper specific practical steps that could be taken to develop existing efforts through, for example, increased local recruitment by peacekeeping operations or the development of linguistic capabilities of persons participating in those operations.

I would like to add one last proposal, because it seems to me that this subject presents a problem that must be dealt with. Frequently in post-conflict situations, the weakness of civil society — and indeed sometimes its collapse — is a handicap in and of itself to peace-building. Our strategies must probably be adapted to the degree of maturity, vitality and structure of the civil society in question. In this regard, it seems to me that it might be useful, at least on an experimental basis and in a limited number of cases at the beginning, to have reports assessing civil society in some countries. I think that we could proceed by analogy with what economists do in their reports on human development. In line with today's debate, such reports on the development of civil society should not be prepared by Governments or by institutions. However, they could be the outcome of collaboration between major global non-governmental organizations that have experience in this area, as well as organizations from local civil society. Such work, to ensure its objectivity, might also use scientific methodology of an academic nature, such as the interesting work by Professor Helmut Anheier, of the Center for Civil Society of the University of Southern California, in conjunction with the London School of Economics. While Professor Anheier's work is somewhat different, since he is dealing with global civil society, it nonetheless forms a basis that could be used for more specific reports on civil society in certain countries.

My last thought illustrates our deep-rooted conviction on the entirety of this subject. Just as the concept of human development has made an essential contribution to economic thinking, and just as today we can no longer think of peacekeeping operations without including the protection of civil populations, we can no longer conceive of peace-building in post-conflict situations without having a full knowledge of civil society and without trying to build dialogue or coordinate with organizations that express the diversity and vitality of civil society at the local level. I think that therein lies the importance of this debate that the presidency of the Philippines has had the fortunate initiative of organizing today.

The President: I thank the representative of France for highlighting the participation of representatives of civil society in our deliberations. I also note your reference to the great work of Médecins sans Frontières, which I think everyone here recognizes. We note the questions you have raised, as we begin to think of the interplay of the various actors in peace-building. We look forward to looking into the proposals contained in your paper.

Mr. Thomson (United Kingdom): Madam President, we, like other speakers, are very grateful to you for convening this important discussion and for the preparatory work that your delegation has carried out. We welcome you here, and thank you for taking the time to chair this debate. It is also most welcome that you have arranged for us to benefit from the thoughts of the President of the Economic and Social Council, which remind us here in the Security Council of the Economic and Social Council's rich interaction with civil society. I would also particularly welcome the presence here today of Denis Caillaux and Ian Martin of CARE International and the International Center for Transitional Justice for the expert insights and proposals that they have given us. Finally, I associate my delegation with the statement to be delivered later today by the Irish Presidency on behalf of the European Union.

Today's debate gives us an opportunity to explore these issues in more detail, but it should not — and I am sure it will not — be our last opportunity to do so. The subject is too important. The United Kingdom believes that civil society in its broadest sense has an essential role to play in all phases of the conflict cycle, not just peace-building but conflict-prevention and post-conflict reconstruction as well. At the international level, civil society organizations play a key role in holding Governments and international organizations to account. In the Council, our work has often benefited from the expert knowledge of civil society organizations. We have benefited today and we can do more. Their efforts have helped and are helping

us to develop new policy and legal frameworks and to better define best practice.

Civil society's contribution at the regional level is also increasingly important, as our Angolan colleague has reminded us. As regional organizations such as the African Union develop their capacities for conflict management and peace-building, civil society organizations are going to need to plug into these new streams of work. Provision of grass-roots information, provision of early warning, sharing of best practice and acting as implementing partners — these are just a few of the areas in which civil society organizations can help regional organizations fulfil their potential for peace-building. At the national and local levels, as both our non-governmental organization representatives have reminded the Council today, local people and the groups that represent them have a fundamental role to play in the reconciliation and rehabilitation process. Re-establishing legal structures and bodies for transitional justice and the rule of law is one area of the post-conflict peace-building phase towards which civil society, and, in particular, religious and community leaders can contribute.

Underlying all these peace-building issues is the need to build new relationships between government service providers and communities. In that context, civil society needs to be involved in the planning, implementation and monitoring of community-based programmes. As the Secretary-General has reminded the Council this morning, that is a two-way process. United Nations peace-building should promote civil society, just as civil society can assist United Nations peace-building. Countries with a strong civil society tend to be more resilient in the face of the stresses and strains of our globalizing world.

This morning, the Secretary-General challenged the Council to respond to the recommendations of the Cardoso Panel on civil society and United Nations relations. The report (A/58/817), issued only yesterday morning, contains some far-reaching recommendations. We hope they will enhance exchanges with civil society both in New York and in the field, and we look forward to considering them in detail over the coming weeks. But I wanted to respond in preliminary way to the report's paragraphs 95 to 100 and its proposal 12 on how civil society can strengthen the Security Council.

One can address this question under many different headings — and the French Ambassador has offered us several thoughtful ones this morning. I would myself suggest three. The first is the question of sustained communication and coordination between civil society organizations and the United Nations system at the field level. This is important in the context of monitoring and evaluation: to identify what works well and what does not and to highlight specific issues of concern to the Security Council, including early warning, which we discussed in an earlier, recent debate.

Thus, effective communication and coordination mechanisms need to be considered in the planning and implementation phases of United Nations operations. In that context, the Panel recommends that Security Council field missions should meet regularly with the appropriate local civil society leaders and other representatives of civil society. This morning, Mr. Denis Caillaux urged the Council to consider an "Arria-plus" formula on the ground. That seems to me entirely welcome, and to some extent, we are pursuing that in the Council's mission to West Africa this week, engaging with a range of civil society actors and hearing their views.

I would just observe that the West Africa mission is trying to cover some eight countries in nine days. That limits the amount of time for interaction with civil society. It seems to me that this points inevitably towards a redesign of Security Council missions to the field. I think they need to be smaller so that they can be more frequent.

Another proposal from the Panel that is relevant to this question of communication and coordination at the field level is the idea of convening independent commissions of inquiry following United Nations operations mandated by the Council. The suggestion is that perhaps a global public policy committee, connecting national foreign affairs committees, could serve as such as a commission. I certainly think this deserves careful consideration because we believe it is important that lessons should be learned from each United Nations operation. At the same time — and I am looking at Mr. Ian Martin here — I am not sure that Special Representatives of the Secretary-General on the ground want to spend each waking minute thinking about what the independent commission is going to say on their performance when it is all over. So, we need to find a happy medium.

My second heading is the role that civil society organizations have to play in the direct exchange of information with the Council here in New York on countries under the Council's consideration. We are already benefiting from the Arria-formula meetings and using them to receive accurate, reliable and independent information from the field, which is crucial to sharpen the focus of Security Council resolutions and peacekeeping mandates in order to help ensure that they have the maximum impact where they count, which is in the field. So, I am sure that we will look positive'y — but as the French Ambassador has pointed out, on a case-by-case basis — at improving the planning and effectiveness of the Arria-formula meetings, which is the first proposal of the Cardoso Panel. This morning, Mr. Caillaux offered the Council the suggestion — if I understood him correctly — that New York delegations and country experts should spend some time in the field. I can report to him that my delegation will enthusiastically accept the next invitation of CARE International.

Finally, my last heading — and it is an important one — is the role that we believe civil society must play as the Council develops the international legal framework on key security and protection issues, such as gender, children, HIV/AIDS, mine action and refugees, to name but a few. Over recent years, the Council has adopted a catalogue of resolutions that have helped establish best practices on key issues relevant for post-conflict peace-building. We think we need to, and can, push this agenda further by including agreed best practices in the Council's resolutions and asking the right questions of reports.

In that context, the Cardoso Panel's suggestion for an experimental series of Security Council seminars to discuss issues of emerging importance to the Council, which the Panel suggests would be particularly relevant in the context of the Council's consideration of generic peace-building issues, looks to us to be an attractive one.

The President: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom, especially as he welcomed me so warmly. I am delighted to be here. We also appreciate his valuable comments and very specific suggestions.

Mr. Konuzin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Madam Minister, we are very happy to see you presiding over this meeting of the Security Council and leading the Philippine delegation, which has been providing a very effective presidency for the current month.

The Security Council's consideration of the various conflict situations on its agenda and the experiences of United Nations peacekeeping operations have shown that restoring solid peace and achieving genuine settlements in countries that have undergone a crisis is possible only by means of a comprehensive approach. An integral part of that approach is civil society's participation in that process. Civil society's active participation is an important requirement for achieving true national reconciliation. That participation spans a broad range of activities, from establishing national commissions on truth and reconciliation and organizing international dialogues to participating in transitional Governments of national unity.

Civil society is an important link between a Government and the various political groups and often emerges as a factor in the promotion of peace talks and in overcoming obstacles to national reconciliation. Unfortunately, not all participants in civil society take unbiased positions that are politically neutral. The outbreak of violence that took place in March in Kosovo and the recurring crises in Haiti are persuasive evidence of the importance of establishing a mature civil society for post-conflict consolidation.

Peace-building work can be most effective when a national Government successfully interacts with civil society and peacekeeping missions, with a key role played by the United Nations. An important role can also be played by regional organizations and by international non-governmental organizations. It is clear, therefore, that the United Nations could help pool the efforts of all the participants and channel them into a common, constructive direction.

The activities of civil society are closely interwoven with the question of the protection of human rights. It is only natural; NGOs, in their work with civil society, unfortunately encounter instances of human rights violations, to which they react. Moreover, non-governmental organizations can serve as a barometer, detecting trends that could pose a threat to the stabilization process. In that way, they can be a key element in conflict-prevention machinery at an early stage. We must also bear in mind, however, that information provided by NGOs can sometimes be of a subjective nature.

The experience of the United Nations in various parts of the world makes clear the indissociable link between the establishment of peace and fully fledged socio-economic recovery for those in countries that have suffered from conflicts. Our discussion today corroborates the importance of interaction between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council in the area of post-conflict peace-building and restoration. That is the area where, first and foremost, mutually complementary efforts must be made by the principal organs of the United Nations, including appropriate consideration of the potential of civil society.

We believe that, with respect to the work of NGOs in rendering humanitarian assistance and helping those in need, we have an international clearinghouse for these matters — namely the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, which has at its disposal a full array of interaction mechanisms in that area. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee is also a very effective instrument for coordination.

The role of civil society in post-conflict peace-building is not limited to the provision of assistance in the resolution of thorny humanitarian and socio-economic problems. In the restoration process, it must also be a driving force in State-building and in setting up criminal justice and rule of law systems. Without the active participation of civil society, it is impossible to work, on a solid and long-term basis, for the restoration of a normal civilian life and ensure the irreversibility of the peace process as well as the establishment of political institutions and judiciary and law enforcement systems.

A comprehensive approach to resolving such crisis situations requires uninterrupted and consistent work in the transition from one phase to the next. In that regard, it is of great importance to have the political support of the Security Council for peacekeeping efforts, which are to be carried out under the Charter of the United Nations and through the relevant United Nations organs and its specialized agencies. It is the active involvement of civil society organizations in such peace-building efforts that will help truly to strengthen the role of NGOs in post-conflict situations.

Finally, in terms of the interrelation between the Security Council and NGOs, it is our delegation's opinion that a positive kind of practice has developed in this type of cooperation, which pleases us. That practice is based on the Charter of the United Nations and relates to the real need for communication between the Security Council and civil society. It does not seem to us that we should deviate from the framework of that practice.

The President: I wish particularly to thank the representative of the Russian Federation for the kind words he addressed to our presidency. I am sure Ambassador Baja is very happy to hear your expression of recognition.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to say to you, Madam Minister, how pleased I am to see you presiding over the work of our Council. I should like to thank you for having chosen this subject, which is very topical and relevant, as its consideration coincides with yesterday's publication of the long-awaited report on relations between the United Nations and civil society.

The report of the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations-Civil Society Relations corroborates the fact that civil society is now a pivotal actor at all levels and that the United Nations, as an intergovernmental agency, must, in the interests of effectiveness and openness, establish renewed relations with this very useful partner. That is true of all the major agencies of the United Nations and, of course, of the Security Council as it discharges its mandate for peace.

Along those lines, I would note that the commendable effort towards openness made by the Council in the last decade vis-à-vis representatives of civil society through the more frequent use of the Arria formula remains, unfortunately, somewhat limited in scope and has a tendency to increase and to entrench the representational imbalance between the North and the South.

From that standpoint, the establishment of a fund aimed at strengthening the capacity of civil society in countries of the South, advocated by my delegation for some years now and now recommended by the Panel of Eminent Persons, could contribute to correcting that imbalance and could help us hear the voice, too long ignored, of the NGOs of the South as well as the voices of all peoples of the world.

Turning to today's topic, it is clear that NGOs, which are actively involved in various critical tasks in areas where the United Nations is sometimes absent, make an invaluable contribution to global efforts to stabilize those countries that are emerging from conflict.

The evolution of the concept of peacekeeping on the one hand, and, on the other, the fact that peacekeeping operations have become more and more complex, should, from our standpoint, prompt the Council to embark upon a complete overhaul of its approach to the question of peace-building, including ways to broaden and strengthen the effective contribution of civil society to that process, by drawing inspiration from, inter alia, some of the recommendations made by the Panel of Eminent Persons.

In reality, a mutually beneficial partnership has already developed between the Security Council and civil society in conducting peace processes, based on a division of labour. NGOs already assume the role of peace adjuncts for the Security Council — a task they perform with courage, despite the fact that their representatives on the ground sometimes put their lives at risk.

The experience and the expertise that NGOs have developed from practical interaction can be extremely useful to a Security Council that is confronted with situations that are increasingly complex and where expertise and direct knowledge may sometimes be lacking. That experience and knowledge are too important to be neglected or ignored; the Council must make the best possible use of them. What is more, it must rely more resolutely on national and international civil society to succeed in establishing peace.

It is obvious that, by definition, the peace-building phase represents the area where we must rethink and redefine cooperation between governmental and non-governmental organizations through clear sharing of their roles and responsibilities. Indeed, in this critical phase for the future of peace processes, civil society can make an even more valuable contribution to peace-building because it often interacts directly with citizens and in many cases knows how to win their trust.

From that perspective, we believe that the task of reconciliation and national reconstruction cannot be successfully accomplished unless it is carried out by a dynamic and engaged civil society. Indeed, the fragility of peace processes is often due to the weakness or marginalization of civil society. Peace agreements negotiated and concluded by armed factions whose main concern remains taking or sharing power give short shrift to the representatives of civil society. In fact, such representatives are often targeted by violence, because they are seen as competitors at worst and as nuisances at best.

Unfortunately, Security Council action is too often influenced by that vision, and therefore, its resolutions are seen as dominated by the security dimension dictated by a feeling of urgency. Resolutions 1528 (2004) and 1545 (2004) — concerning the United Nations operations in Côte d'Ivoire and in Burundi, respectively — do not mention the role of civil society, while resolution 1509 (2003), on the United Nations Mission in Liberia, refers to it only fleetingly. However, those are multidimensional missions that should have accorded to civil society its due place.

The assistance of the community of international non-governmental organizations is valuable, but it cannot substitute for the even more important role of local associations. We believe that ownership by national non-governmental organizations of reconstruction tasks is vital. Therefore, rebuilding civil society must be among the priority objectives — together with restoring State authority and strengthening State institutions — that we must set, because in many cases the major challenge for countries emerging from conflict is national reconciliation, and civil society is well placed to contribute to that process.

The desire to live together and the feeling of belonging to a national collectivity that transcends religious and ethnic ties are often undermined by conflicts fed by mutual hatred and the will to destroy. The contribution of all is therefore essential to meet this challenge. Members of the clergy, intellectuals, journalists and humanitarian and human rights organizations, but also the business community, can thus play a major role in spreading a culture of peace, repairing the social fabric, restoring a national sense of belonging and putting in place the conditions required to establish a democratic society and to resume economic activity.

The ownership process also depends on civil society's involvement in the development of a crisis

exit strategy that coincides with the closure of the peace operation and the establishment of a normalized United Nations presence in the country. The sooner and the more closely civil society is involved in managing the transition period, the more effectively it will contribute to the peace process and to the achievement of lasting peace and stability.

The President: I thank the representative of Algeria for highlighting the mutually beneficial relationship that exists between civil society and the Council in addressing complex situations, especially in peace processes.

Mr. Holliday (United States of America): First, let me express my delegation's appreciation to you, Madam President, for leading the Council's deliberations on a topic of complexity and genuine importance and for providing us with the non-paper that has formed the basis for our discussion. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, who was here earlier; Ambassador Rasi, for her contribution; and Mr. Denis Caillaux and Mr. Ian Martin, who represent two of the key players in this important endeavour. Their presence adds significance to our debate and is clear evidence of their personal commitment to finding creative ways for civil society organizations to engage with the United Nations to better meet future challenges.

In his inauguration speech, President Bush said, "A civil society demands from each of us goodwill and respect, fair dealing and forgiveness". It is up to each of us, as individuals, to embody those traits within civil society organizations. In the United States, of course, civil society plays a vital role in complementing the efforts of Government or even in taking the lead in key issues, particularly at the local level. It is up to us, as Governments, to tap into the power of civil society to help achieve international peace and security.

Civil society organizations can flourish in societies where good governance and the rule of law are applied; where political institutions are strong; where civil and political rights are fully recognized; where participation in electoral processes is guaranteed; and where human rights, freedom of expression and independent media are respected. The presence of a healthy civil society is more likely to create a lasting peace. Hence, it is important that the United Nations support the growth and inclusion of civil society organizations, particularly in post-conflict situations.

The importance of civil society in those scenarios as a source of information, but also particularly as a check on the abuses of power and as a guarantor of democratic institutions, has been underlined as a specific illustration in the recent preparations for the Council's West Africa mission. The Council held an Arria-style meeting to foster the dialogue between civil society organizations and the United Nations. Non-governmental organizations were able to highlight concerns for the region and for individual countries, and Council members will follow up with meetings with civil society organizations while they are on the ground.

Of course, we look for a back-and-forth interaction with civil society organizations not just when we need to discuss a particular issue — such as the mission — but over a regular period of time, and we find it very valuable to listen to the views of those who are on the ground and who have the expertise in shaping our positions and our opinions. In addition to the Arria-style meeting, the Council mission will benefit from the contributions of civil society organizations in informing their future deliberations on these issues, and it will ensure that they are familiar with a full range of voices within the countries, including the voices of those who may not yet be represented at the political level in countries in transition and of those who may have useful critiques of the political leadership.

Having a home to return to is a great task for any post-conflict peace-building society. Among the most significant potential resources now available to assist nations in their efforts at post-conflict peace-building is the United Nations itself. In its deliberations two weeks ago, the Council focused on civilians in armed conflict. Finding homes for such displaced persons poses a unique and special challenge. In addition, finding a home to return to plays a role in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes and activities, in which civil society organizations play an integral role.

The strong presence that civil society groups maintain on the ground has provided us early warning signals with regard to the crisis in Darfur. That crisis is an example of how civil society groups such as CARE and Doctors Without Borders, as has been mentioned,

can assist in addressing that very serious problem. The situation in Darfur has rightly been called the greatest humanitarian disaster today. Civil society organizations have played an important role in increasing attention to the crisis, and they will continue to play a vital role in bringing an end to violence, saving lives and helping to rebuild a shattered society.

In closing, I would just like to point out that Ambassador Rasi mentioned that there should be an active role for the Economic and Social Council. We also believe that the Economic and Social Council and its various ad hoc advisory groups provide an important link with civil society and will allow us to benefit from their expertise as we move forward. We also share Ambassador Thomson's view that early warning from the field and dialogue on an ongoing basis in the field between civil society organizations and the United Nations are absolutely vital. My delegation looks forward to hearing from others, particularly the Secretary-General's high-level panel, on the role of civil society organizations not only in peace-building but also in conflict prevention.

Lessons learned from the past may help us address ways to better support future peace-building efforts. Our challenge is to instil confidence in the proposition that conflict, no matter how tragic, can give way to human and social betterment, and civil society organizations can effectively contribute to that noble end.

The President: I thank the representative of the United States for highlighting the need for a healthy civil society and the role of the United Nations in ensuring that health.

Mr. Muñoz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish at the outset to welcome Minister Delia Domingo Albert and the initiative of the Philippines to hold this open debate of the Security Council on the role of civil society in post-conflict peace-building. We also welcome the participation in the debate of Ambassador Marjatta Rasi, President of the Economic and Social Council, Mr. Denis Caillaux, Secretary-General of CARE, and Mr. Ian Martin of the International Center for Transitional Justice.

As we know, post-conflict situations are complex. Their consequences include not only the obvious military and security dimensions, but also particularly political, economic, social and humanitarian aspects that are essential to ensuring stability and that often not only affect the society directly involved, but also transcend national borders and increasingly assume regional dimensions.

The statements we have heard this morning have highlighted the enormous challenge inherent in post-conflict peace-building for affected societies as well as for the regions involved and the international community as a whole, including, of course, the United Nations. That is why, during its Council presidency last January, Chile promoted a debate on post-conflict national reconciliation. Therefore we attach great importance to the topic presented by the Philippines, which emphasizes what occurs in post-conflict situations.

The nature of contemporary conflicts, increasingly of intra-State origin, has changed the manner of dealing with them, with regard to both preventing them and resolving them. Post-conflict peace-building requires multidisciplinary approaches in which civil society and non-governmental organizations have an important role to play.

As the report of former President Fernando Henrique Cardoso on civil society (A/58/817) has highlighted, "constructively engaging with civil society is a necessity for the United Nations, not an option". Civil society, composed of various non-State actors, has played important roles in supporting conflict prevention, and it therefore has no less an important role to play in peace-building phases in order to make peace sustainable.

Many civil society organizations are active in the areas of protecting human rights and international humanitarian law. They have played a key role in the search for justice and in reconstructing judicial powers in post-conflict situations in order to, among other things, impede impunity when there have been mass human rights violations.

Other organizations develop important activities in more specific areas, such as those aimed at preventing illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and protecting civilians in armed conflict. They also have had positive experience in promoting impartiality among the media, in their capacity to mediate between conflicting interests and in providing early warning of imminent humanitarian crises and in raising public awareness in that respect. Therefore, they are key actors that must be present and contribute in a

coordinated manner with State actors and the United Nations.

The Security Council must seek the active participation of the broadest sectors of civil society. In particular, it should try to ensure that the civil society involved in these processes includes not only international actors, but also local ones, including women working in the field to build peace, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), which reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building.

Allow me to touch upon another specific aspect to which members of civil society can contribute. I am referring to action in the private sector. Businesses, obviously different from non-governmental organizations, are neither philanthropic entities nor peacekeeping organizations. They are engines of wealth production that pursue profit. However, because of the nature of their activities they are endowed with a certain sensitivity and conditions required to achieve their goals, which can help anticipate the onset of conflict and can help generate conflict prevention or mitigation strategies. In the area of peace-building, businesses can, with their local partners, mobilize the will of broad economic and social sectors. Businesses can offer financial support for productive quick-impact projects, for example, through employment initiatives for former combatants. Often it is precisely the lack of employment of former combatants that causes conflicts to re-emerge. That is an important aspect of sustainable peace.

The possibility also exists to explore the idea of matching funds — parallel contributions; that is, co-financing of reconstruction projects in which a business could contribute the same amount that a donor Government does to finance disarmament, demobilization or reconstruction projects. Of course, in the case of the business sector, it is certain that it will be advisable to develop a set of incentives to encourage a country to be involved in the peace-building phase. The United Nations can assist with that.

I wonder how many businesses now stand ready to create employment in order to raise hope in Haiti and to earn money in a country that is close to important markets and has a highly skilled labour force. This is a concrete challenge to civil society in the post-conflict peace-building phase.

Finally, as the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has indicated in its reports to the Security Council, the post-conflict period is the most important phase because funds must be made available not only to provide humanitarian assistance to save lives, but also to contribute to projects with a decisive impact on ensuring sustainable peace. In many case, a long-term commitment must be made.

We commend you once again, Madam, for having convened the Security Council to address today's important topic, which can have a tangible effect on its work in addressing conflicts and their aftermath.

The President: I thank the representative of Chile for welcoming and giving full value to this open debate on this most important subject.

Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to thank you, Madam, most especially for being here with us today and for your guidance of this important debate.

The delegation of Spain thanks the Philippines presidency for having taken the very timely step of convening this debate on the vital role of civil society in post-conflict peace-building. It is a timely initiative because only yesterday we received the report prepared by the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations-Civil Society Relations, chaired by Mr. Cardoso. We know that the report will have a great impact on our future thinking on this issue. It is timely also because today, more than ever, the international community needs the cooperation of organized civil society in undertaking the most important tasks towards fulfilling the principles and objectives of the United Nations.

We also thank the President of the Economic and Social Council and the representatives of civil society for their presence at and valuable contributions to today's debate.

The Presidency of the European Union will be taking the floor later in the meeting, and my delegation of course endorses the statement to be delivered by the representative of Ireland on behalf of the Union. I should like to summarize here the general thrust of that statement.

First, we stress the importance of the participation of civil society in developing effective multilateralism. Secondly, we support the establishment of relations of close and healthy cooperation among all actors in peace-building, and

encourage civil society organizations to provide moral support for the population and local structures. Thirdly, we believe that we must further develop machinery to govern United Nations interaction with the representative organizations of civil society, which we feel to be more necessary today than ever.

As to civil society and effective multilateralism, we do not see this purely as an instance of international institutions and the United Nations system's being brought to bear to solve problems that cannot be addressed solely by States. Multilateralism is effective only if all forces in the international arena are brought together, including an increasingly transnational civil society that can often extend itself further and have a more decisive impact than States or inter-State organizations. Multilateralism will not be effective unless all actors take part in an open and participatory way in the establishment of values and norms and of working mechanisms and methods that underlie such international action. Such participation must, of course, be present in political processes of peace and security throughout the world.

Since the 1990s, we have been faced with an increase in the number of conflicts with local or regional significance that are both persistent and recurrent. The effects of such conflicts do not disappear upon the mere cessation of hostilities. Their societal effects persist over time, with serious consequences for the civilian population and an impact on the stability of the States and the regions affected. Only resolute and coherent action on the part of the international community over long periods can prevent or avert recurring conflict.

At the same time, the concentration of such conflicts in certain regions may be a disincentive to external peace-building initiatives. On many occasions, external actors — essentially States and international organizations — may be put off by complex situations, particularly those in remote, isolated areas. Civil society can meet such challenges, using its increasingly global networks to go where others either do not wish to or cannot go. We must therefore work to ensure shared complementarity among all actors, beginning with national actors themselves, who are first and foremost responsible for post-conflict peace-building. Together, we must find effective criteria for cases where international organizations and States, as external actors, abandon the field. Similarly, national Governments are responsible for defining areas in which civil society can become involved in peace-building.

When civil society is properly organized, it can go further, and frequently make room for more open dialogue at the local level, than States and other international actors. That is why protection and respect for their activities are vital. Such dialogue and mutual cooperation should in no way require civil society organizations to become subject to governmental actors. While sovereignty must be respected and non-interference in domestic affairs observed where they establish legitimate limitations to participation, there must be free participation in the peace-building process. Dialogue between civil society organizations, Governments and international institutions must be promoted and strengthened. If initiatives to build peace have not been fully generated and supported internally in the countries affected, and thus fail to generate external support for local capacities, such action will ultimately prove to be unproductive.

Civil society plays a function that we often deem to be crucial in conflict prevention and solution, as well as in meeting the humanitarian needs of populations devastated by conflicts. Those functions must be enhanced, as the General Assembly and the Secretary-General, among others, have indicated, the latter in his report on the prevention of armed conflict. Also, in the context of the European Union we could refer to the recent conference on the role of civil society in the prevention of armed conflict, whose action-oriented agenda was adopted on 2 April in Dublin.

In addition to all that, and as important is it is, we believe that civil society organizations have a moral role. I refer to the moral function of focusing their actions on direct support to civilians, promoting their security, their social well-being and respect for their identity and their fundamental rights and liberties. It is a matter of acting not only in the immediate peace-building phase, but of working for a post-conflict transformation that would bring with it true peace. This moral function must include support especially to the most vulnerable persons, such as women and children, so that they can be central actors in peace-building and the most direct beneficiaries of its results.

We believe in the application of Security Council resolutions that refer to women, to peace and security and to the protection of children and generally the

protection of civilians in armed conflict. That post-conflict transformation, by which all of the actors must work with one accord, will be more viable to the extent that international civil society devotes its efforts to complementing and strengthening organizations in local civil society so that such objectives can be attained. Improving the capabilities and resources of civil societies in countries emerging from conflict is a prerequisite for rectifying inequalities between civil societies in the North and the South.

Together with this, we believe that in this moral work civil society must direct its efforts towards the re-establishment of justice and the rule of law. Following a conflict situation, it is essential to try to provide, for the populations that have been afflicted by the confrontation, justice for what has occurred in the past as much as justice for the present and the future. That work must be tackled in coordination with local organizations of civil society and government institutions, as well as together with support from States and interested international organs. It must also be incorporated into the sphere of education as one of the means for preventing the reappearance of the conflict.

Civil society calls for a process of dialogue with the United Nations system on how the shared objectives can be achieved, particularly in post-conflict peace-building. We trust that the thinking process and the discussion that commenced with the publication of the Cardoso report will shed further light and make it possible to make concrete progress in this direction.

We believe that interaction between the United Nations and civil society does not exclusively fall within the purview of any of the principal organs in the Charter. All have their own functions in this process. The United Nations as a whole and its Member States must give careful thought, starting now, to how we can deal more effectively with the challenges of peace-building and, in that context, how better to develop dialogue with civil society organizations.

The Security Council, insofar as it is concerned, without abandoning its primary responsibility to ensure peace and security, must seek opportunities for consideration, for action, with other principle organs of the Organization, especially the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat. In that meeting point, civil society can also participate to the extent that it is considered that its contribution would be productive.

Then the United Nations might define broad parameters for common action in the field of peace-building. Dialogue between the Security Council and civil society actors should be made deeper, employing existing informal machinery. Constructive dialogue with Security Council missions in the field should also be encouraged. The representatives and special envoys of the Secretary-General and resident representatives also bear particular responsibility in establishing positive dialogue with representatives of civil society in each situation in each affected country. Coordinated, sustained work on the part of all should contribute to progress in addressing post-conflict situations and peace-building.

This discussion on the participation of civil society in peace-building is making headway, largely thanks to the activities undertaken by the Philippine presidency. We are sure that from now on it will continue to make progress and to take effective steps in the direction that we all wish.

The President: I thank the representative of Spain for underscoring the timeliness of this meeting following the recent release of the Cardoso report on United Nations relations with civil society.

Mr. Khalid (Pakistan): We welcome your presence, Madam President, and the initiative of the Philippines presidency in organizing this open debate. We thank the Secretary-General for his presence this morning and for his important statement. We also acknowledge the presence of the President of the Economic and Social Council and her valuable contribution.

The non-paper circulated by Ambassador Baja has helped guide the Council's thematic deliberations today, which, we hope, will benefit all, the victims of conflict in particular. We are also happy to see two respected non-governmental organizations — CARE International and the International Center for Transitional Justice — participating in the discussion. We appreciate their work, both in the field and in the deliberative process.

The role and contribution of civil society in United Nations processes have dramatically increased, especially in the last two decades. This ever-evolving relationship has been the subject of a number of

reviews, discussions and studies. We express our appreciation to President Cardoso and other members of the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations-Civil Society Relations for their comprehensive report. It is a well-intentioned effort that will contribute a great deal in streamlining the engagement of civil society with the United Nations processes. The report — in particular, the proposals contained therein — will be carefully studied. Hopefully, the general membership will pronounce itself on the report in due course. We look forward to detailed discussions on it by the Member States. My delegation will remain constructively engaged in the process.

Since the demise of the cold war era there has been an upsurge in the number and the intensity of conflicts all over the world. Triggered by one or a mix of several factors — economic deprivation, social disintegration, cultural discrimination and political difference — those conflicts engender complex crises in terms of human suffering, institutional instability and pervasive underdevelopment. There is an ever-increasing need for the international community to evolve a comprehensive, integrated and coherent response to those conflicts. In this context I wish to recall that Pakistan has already proposed the establishment of ad hoc composite committees of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council to effectively address the complex crises in their political, economic and social dimensions.

Over the last decade, international peacekeeping operations in post-conflict situations have vastly expanded in character to include multidimensional nation-building and establishing or reviving State structures. This necessitates an interactive interface among the relevant United Nations entities, led by the Security Council and a host of local, national, regional and international actors and stakeholders, all working in synergy. The Security Council, through its debates and resolutions, can guide the further development of a peace-building doctrine. International civil society organizations can help by sharing their field experience, best practices and lessons learned in the Council's deliberative process, such as the Arria formula meetings, open debates, seminars and informal interaction.

While structural causes of conflicts need to be addressed by States, a reinvigorated civil society, the bedrock of any State system, can make a valuable contribution through fostering peace-building relationships and consolidating the peace process. Civil society can work in tandem with the United Nations agencies on the ground, in particular with peacekeeping missions operating under Security Council mandate, to help with the safe return of displaced populations, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, assistance for economic and social progress and re-establishing the rule of law. A truly credible civil society organization enjoying the confidence of all actors can even facilitate the stimulation of political dialogue and harness the energy of the people in a constructive direction.

Efforts to strengthen civil society is a necessity that can be facilitated by the international community in a number of ways, such as by assisting local communities and individuals in designing programmes, by providing capacity-building services and access to financing and by establishing legal entities such as cooperatives. These local civil society organizations can serve as an effective and efficient bridge between local authorities and the international community, including donor communities. They can even help in identifying priority reconstruction and development projects and in monitoring the judicial utilization of resources.

Since each post-conflict situation presents a unique set of circumstances, there cannot be a one-size-fits-all model of governmental, intergovernmental and civil society interaction. Therefore, the Council may consider tailoring such activities on a case-by-case basis, weaving them into each individual peacekeeping mandate. Peace missions should expand their efforts to build on existing local resources and utilize local actors and civil society organizations. Proactive involvement of international civil society organizations beyond humanitarian assistance and, where applicable, capacity-building of local civil society, could be counter-productive.

The Council could consider enhancing the effectiveness of the existing mechanisms by making use of the contribution that civil society may be able to offer. The Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, the Security Council's missions and peacekeeping operations could all be asked to consult the local civil society in a structural way. They need to ensure that the civil society organization is broad-based, inclusive, participatory and, most importantly,

indigenous. In fact, the whole process should be domestically owned rather than imposed from outside.

Finally, the fact that many conflict situations arise from the politics of poverty and scarcity cannot be ignored. Post-conflict peace-building will inevitably have to be built upon the provision of hope for a better tomorrow to destitute and desperate people. Thus economic and social development must constitute an integral part of the international community's endeavours to promote peace and reconciliation on a sustainable basis. The United Nations and its family of organizations, as well as civil society, have a vital role to play in generating equitable social economic development in these countries and regions for effective and sustainable peace-building.

The President: I thank the representative of Pakistan for citing the need to engage and strengthen civil society organizations in the United Nations processes.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Madam President, first of all, we would like to welcome you as you preside over this session. We thank the Secretary-General and the President of the Economic and Social Council for their statements. We would also like to welcome the representatives of CARE International and the International Center for Transitional Justice to our discussion today.

Our debate today is significant, not only because the role played by civil society organizations in the international arena has attracted increasing attention, but also because the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations-Civil Society Relations has just published its report, entitled "We the peoples: civil society, the United Nations and global governance" (A/58/817). In recent years, many organizations from civil society have actively participated in the prevention and settlement of conflicts and post-conflict peace-building. They have done a lot of work that deserves to be recognized for promoting peace in the African countries concerned, for helping the reconstruction in Afghanistan and calling for a fair and just resolution to the issue of the Middle East. These actions have valuably supplemented the efforts of the international community in ameliorating humanitarian situations and accelerating the peace process. We encourage and support civil society organizations in continuing their constructive role in post-conflict reconstruction.

I would like to take this opportunity to make the following comments: First of all, the involvement of civil society organizations in post-conflict peace-building should be guided by the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, which are the most powerful instruments for promoting the peace, development and progress of humankind and thus also provide crucial guidance in the proper settlement of conflicts and peace-building. Governments and the international community should not be the only ones to strictly follow these principles. Civil society organizations also have an obligation to abide by them. Only by so doing will civil society be able to maintain its correct orientation while engaging in relevant activities. Also, and of equal importance, the will of the Government and people concerned in a conflict should be attentively heeded. Local culture and religious traditions should be fully respected. At the same time, the principles of objectivity, justice and neutrality should be upheld. Involvement with any party to the conflict should be avoided. In this way, the efforts of civil society organizations will be welcomed by the local general public and will be able to get twice the results with half the effort.

Secondly, civil society organizations should actively complement the efforts of the international community, in particular the United Nations, in helping post-conflict countries and regions seek sustainable peace. The main responsibility for post-conflict reconstruction in various fields should no doubt be borne by the United Nations, other international and regional organizations and the Governments concerned. Civil society organizations should support the central role of the United Nations, assisting in the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, and should enhance their coordination and cooperation with the various United Nations agencies. They should also actively offer ideas and advice on how to accelerate peace and reconstruction. On the other hand, the United Nations should also strengthen its communication with civil society through appropriate means and heed its opinions and suggestions. The Arria formula meetings and the contacts between the Security Council missions and civil society are both very useful experiments. In this respect, we note that the report of the Panel of Eminent Persons has put forward several recommendations on strengthening relations between the Security Council and civil society. Those recommendations deserve our careful study. I would like to emphasize that the

international community should pay more attention to civil society in the developing countries and encourage them to participate more actively and, if necessary, to provide support for them.

Thirdly, the focus should be on assisting in economic reconstruction and sustainable development. Civil society organizations possess advantages of resources, expertise and skills. Not only do they have a role to play in such areas as providing humanitarian relief, promoting the administration of justice and advocating national reconciliation, they also have much to do in mobilizing international support to help countries in conflict areas develop their economies, eradicate poverty, increase employment, restore infrastructure and enhance national and local capacity-building.

Conflicts today are increasingly complex and varied. In such circumstances, integrated and systematic strategies must be adopted to realize the goals of post-conflict reconstruction. All actors concerned in the international community should be actively involved in this process, carry out their own mandates and do what they can while strengthening cooperation.

In resolution 57/337, the General Assembly reaffirmed the importance of civil society's supporting role and invited it to pursue practices that foster a climate of peace, help to prevent or mitigate crisis situations and contribute to reconciliation. We expect civil society organizations to continue their efforts towards that end.

The President: I thank the representative of China for recognizing in his statement the growing importance of civil society in global governance, especially in accelerating peace processes.

Mr. Sardenberg (Brazil): I wish to express our honour and pleasure that you, Madam President, are presiding over the work of the Security Council today. We are thankful to you for the initiative taken by the delegation of the Philippines in proposing for debate an issue as important as the role of civil society in post-conflict peace-building. We are also thankful to Ambassador Rasi, President of the Economic and Social Council, Mr. Caillaux, Secretary-General of CARE International and Mr. Martin, Vice-President of the International Center for Transitional Justice, for having so ably introduced the item on the Council's agenda.

Governments and the United Nations system do not deal in isolation with the complex challenges of post-conflict situations. Indeed, the success of peace-building efforts requires political wisdom, the mobilization of a wide range of actors and the ability to make full use of the expertise, resourcefulness and other comparative advantages of non-State sectors of society. Organized civil society may play a central role in relieving governmental structures strained by peace-building efforts. It should be seen as an effective partner in reconstruction efforts, and its work in the field, such as humanitarian assistance, poverty alleviation and the protection of human rights, can make post-conflict management considerably easier by helping diffuse tensions that have the potential to rekindle conflict. Moreover, its work tends to be very cost-effective in times of tight budgets.

In order to take full advantage of civil society's contribution to post-conflict peace-building, we should, in the first instance, consolidate the active dialogue and cooperation between it and the Council. The non-governmental organization (NGO) Working Group on the Security Council, established in 1995, is now a useful forum for debate, equally beneficial to Council members and NGO constituencies, providing a two-way flow of information and expertise.

In addition, dialogue can be furthered by resorting in a more systematic way to meetings under the Arria formula, which allow the particular experience and insight of NGOs to help in the Council's debates. Civil society and NGO representatives should have a greater opportunity to brief Council members, provide answers to their questions and be fully updated on Council activities. The particular role played by the representatives of civil society at the national and local levels cannot be dispensed with, as they usually have the benefit of life-long knowledge of the characteristics and realities of the local economic, cultural and social environment. The Council can benefit from that knowledge when assessing the needs on the ground. The Council's missions, one of which is taking place now in West Africa, offer unique opportunities for such an assessment through unobstructed exchanges with civil society, free from constraints.

However, the contribution of civil society to peace-building is not limited to the exchange of ideas. Inclusion of a significant number of sectors of civil society in peace-building has increased chances for

stable and lasting peace. Assessment by independent actors closer to the field can provide crucial inputs to peace-building. Research networks, for instance, can interpret information, thus strengthening early-warning capabilities with respect to problems in post-conflict peace-building. In a similar way, local civil society leadership, which has strong ties to communities, can detect tensions, unrest and sources of imbalance long before Governments or peace-builders perceive them. Their expertise and contact with society can also be useful in the elaboration of exit strategies, as they can help avoid premature counterproductive withdrawals that would jeopardize the results of the international effort.

In addition, peace-building efforts already rely on the participation in post-conflict situations of NGOs as members of a larger partnership. NGOs have been called upon to provide assistance and a wide range of services. Humanitarian organizations in particular have been a key factor in supporting and protecting victims, especially women and children, in situations of conflict when other forms of protection are not available. Their voice should continue to be heard during the peace-building process. The ability of community leaders and NGOs to provide creative solutions for fulfilling a community's needs can help increase complementarity between governmental efforts and civil society initiatives. Creative solutions, including the sharing of limited resources, shelter and information, can sometimes fill gaps in peace-building.

As is well known, civil society is not monolithic and uniform. In this composite of very diverse and dissimilar groups, we must be able to identify the representatives of true public interest that can be active in helping to promote peace. Authentic representatives of civil society must not be confused with pressure groups, lobby groups and others, whose purposes do not necessarily reflect the legitimate aspirations of the people.

Governments must use regulations to balance conflicting interests. Thus, State regulation and coordination are fundamental to enhancing synergy among the various partners in peace-building. The Security Council must keep in mind the need to encourage civil society actors to behave responsibly and constructively in the promotion of peace, tolerance and reconciliation. In that regard, special attention should be paid to the role of the media in post-conflict situations. As the world saw in Kosovo last March, the media's power of penetration and influence can be misused to sow hatred and incite violence. The same ability to reach the masses, though, could be put to the service of the cause of democracy and human rights standards, which are key to the success of peace-building and to preventing the recurrence of conflict. The positive contribution of the media to the peace-building process is therefore particularly valuable.

The Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations-Civil Society Relations, established by the Secretary-General to review the guidelines in practices regarding that field, concluded that we need constructive engagement with civil society in order to be able better to identify global priorities and to mobilize all available resources to address the complex challenges of today.

The Panel, chaired by former Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, sees this opening up of the United Nations not as a threat but as a "powerful way to reinvigorate the intergovernmental process itself." Let me add that the Panel seeks to correct the representational imbalance at the United Nations between non-governmental organizations from the South and those from the North.

We consider dialogue, positive participation and partnership as cornerstones of a strategy of empowerment that will allow civil society to become an even more active partner in peace-building and no longer be only the main, passive victim of conflict. We are convinced that supporting a strong, participative civil society amounts to supporting the cause of peace and stability.

The President: I thank the representative of Brazil for his kind and warm words of welcome and for citing the significant role of civil society as an effective partner in the reconstruction and post-conflict peace-building efforts of the Council. I should like to take this opportunity to convey, through you, our appreciation to President Cardoso for his important work and contribution.

Mr. Motoc (Romania): Madam President, my delegation feels honoured by your presence at the helm of the Security Council. I would like to congratulate you for having arranged a discussion on a theme which will allow for productive elaboration on the improvement of United Nations peace-building efforts. It is very timely.

I wish also to express our satisfaction at the presence among us this morning of the Secretary-General and of Ambassador Rasi of Finland, President of the Economic and Social Council.

We join other members of the Council in expressing appreciation of the contributions made by representatives of CARE International and of the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ).

I should like also to mention that Romania associates itself with the statement which is to be delivered by Ambassador Ryan of Ireland on behalf of the European Union.

The approach to peace-building continues to evolve in response to the changing nature of each conflict. The term encompasses the full range of commitments undertaken by the international community to assist countries in achieving sustainable peace and development. In its presidential statement of 20 February 2001, the Security Council recognized the role of peace-building in preventing the outbreak, recurrence or continuation of armed conflict through political, developmental, humanitarian and human rights programmes and mechanisms. However, despite the mobilization of a peace-building doctrine, realities on the ground reveal a simultaneous demand for continued commitments to peace-building and a need to re-evaluate the normative, policy, operational and institutional approaches to peace-building.

In that regard, we welcome the topic of our debate today as a means of fostering discussion on enhancing the capacity, knowledge, resources and tools of the United Nations to achieve better outcomes in future peace-building efforts. The question of how to ensure a deeper involvement of civil society organizations in peace-building is a natural component of that framework. Their value to the work of the United Nations has been repeatedly affirmed in this very Chamber, where we recognized that they are instrumental in all processes associated with the consolidation of peace after conflict. That is documented by their active involvement in peace-building efforts and derives from a number of factors.

In many cases, they have a firsthand understanding of conflicts, which is always a crucial element in conflict management. Moreover, in contrast to the transient nature of peacekeeping efforts, their continued presence on the ground affords them opportunities to build long-term relationships, thus creating a sense of trust among opposing political groups. The longevity of their presence and the creation of trust provide civil society organizations with an accessibility international actors frequently lack.

In addition, through their contacts with conflicting parties, civil society actors are in a position to spot emerging crises, thus becoming invaluable resources for an early-warning system for any preventive work. Needless to say, since most conflicts today have at their core ethnic or religious issues, it is the neutral actors, such as multi-ethnic or multifaith civil society organizations, that are able to gain the trust of opposing parties and mobilize ethnic and religious dialogue.

Given the potential of civil society actors in terms of knowledge and intuitive understanding, emphasis should be placed on promoting improved collaboration between the United Nations system and civil society organizations, in order to make peace-building activities more productive, sustainable and cost-effective.

Peace-building encompasses phenomena such as participation, empowerment and national ownership, aimed at the emergence of a sustainable polity within a post-conflict environment. We must foster home-grown political processes in which civil society shares with the international community and local governmental actors the ownership of the reconstruction process. Furthermore, dialogue among civil society actors must be facilitated to allow for discussions, nurture transformations, build consensus and translate policy into practice. Particularly in countries where communities are distrustful of each other or where conflict has eroded societal structures, we must explore all effective models for participatory peace-building through collaboration between civil society organizations and the United Nations system and its mechanisms and partners.

As members of the Council and other representatives are aware, we will hold, during the Romanian presidency, a thematic debate on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in stabilization processes. In that framework, we will welcome any innovative approaches to enhancing the regional capacity for peace-building through the inclusion of civil society organizations in endeavours towards that goal.

Strategies must be designed, regionally and locally, that aim to strengthen these private organizations, build their capability for more effective collaboration and to develop mechanisms for participation in all stages of, and processes related to, peace-building.

Yesterday saw the public release of the report of the Secretary-General's Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations-Civil Society Relations. We commend the recognition therein of the enhancement of the Council's informal relations with civil society, as we have often come together at the right time, especially in such areas as human rights or humanitarian affairs. Such an understanding of has the potential to create the most appropriate avenues and mechanisms for cooperation in order better to implement our tasks.

The President: I thank the representative of Romania for the kind words he addressed for me, for welcoming me to the Council and for highlighting the work of civil society organizations in achieving better outcomes in peace-building due to their presence on the ground in areas of conflict.

Mr. Pleuger (Germany): Permit me at the outset to thank the Philippines presidency for having convened this important meeting. We welcome your presence in the Chair, Madam President, because it shows how much importance you attach to this important subject. We would also like to warmly thank the Secretary-General, the President of the Economic and Social Council, Mr. Caillaux and Mr. Martin for their remarks. We salute the Secretary-General's leadership in pushing for enhanced and meaningful interaction between the United Nations and civil society. We stand ready to support any action that will bring that critical relationship more closely in line with the realities of globalization and the complexities of many other new global challenges of today.

The Presidency of the European Union will touch upon a number of important issues that are not covered by my statement. Needless to say, I fully associate myself with the remarks to be delivered later in this debate by Ambassador Ryan of Ireland on behalf of the European Union.

Experiences with numerous post-conflict situations since the end of the cold war have shown that post-conflict peace-building processes that do not sufficiently involve local actors — of which civil society organizations are a central part — are doomed to failure. That applies to the work of United Nations peacekeeping missions, to wider United Nations efforts for development and stability and to national Governments. Germany is a strong promoter of a culture of conflict prevention and dialogue. For that reason, the federal Government has devised and is implementing an action plan on civilian crisis prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict peace-building. In this concept, civil society plays an indispensable part in peace-building and therefore forms a cornerstone of our strategy.

One of the many important contributions that civil society provides is invaluable information that forms part of an early-warning system on emerging conflicts. In order to preserve the strength of those contributions, it is important to respect civil society's independence from Government. Civil society has a role that is as indispensable as it is distinct from Government and from the military. We wish to pay tribute to the instrumental role that internationally active non-governmental organizations have played in bringing about three major breakthroughs that are cornerstones of the international conflict prevention and post-conflict peace-building architecture: the Ottawa Treaty on landmines, the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and the International Criminal Court. None of those three would have been feasible or possible to implement without the help of civil society.

Germany is also a strong supporter of the global partnership for the prevention of armed conflict that was established to enhance the role of civil society in developing effective action to prevent violent conflict. In order to focus on the role of another crucial group of non-State actors in conflict prevention and peace-building, Germany, as a past President of the Security Council, initiated a debate on the role of business in conflict prevention, peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building.

Having said that, we are fully aware that stable and strong Governments are an equally important precondition for sustainable peace-building. The final decisions and responsibility must remain with Governments. Even the most ingenious creativity of the civil sectors, including civil society, will not succeed in bringing about peace and stability if the decision-making mechanisms of an effective State are missing. Somalia, I believe, is a case in point.

I would now like to focus on a few points that are of practical relevance to the Council. In Germany's view, the Council's recent record on interaction with civil society is, by and large, a good one. We are pleased to note that the report of the Secretary-General's Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations-Civil Society Relations, which was published yesterday, seems to share that assessment. Our initial impression of the report's recommendations is very positive. The recommendations on making better use of Arria-formula meetings and field visits are eminently sensible, and our experience of contacts with non-governmental organizations throughout the Security Council's mission to Afghanistan has been extremely positive, dealing as it did with the complexity of the situation on the ground. We are also prepared to explore creative new ways of enhancing cooperation, such as Chatham House Rules-based seminars.

On the issue of civil society strategies to be pursued by the United Nations field presence, I would like to recall recommendations that were made at a seminar held in 2003 in Istanbul, chaired by Mrs. Nafis Sadik and representing, inter alia, the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Those recommendations included systematic consultation with civil society members through assessment teams preparing new peace operations; secondly, regular consultative meetings between civil society and the highest United Nations representative; thirdly, the establishment of a non-governmental organization coordinator at a senior level in the United Nations field presence; fourthly, the instruction of incoming United Nations mission leaders and personnel by local civil society leaders with regard to in-country norms and cultural traditions; and lastly, transparent and factual information on mission activities and funding in national languages so that civil society may effectively interact with the United Nations mission. We support those recommendations. We trust that, on that basis, a creative and cooperative relationship among civil society, the Security Council and the United Nations system as a whole can be further enhanced and developed.

The President: I particularly welcome the representative of Germany's expression of readiness to support any action that will bring about more enhanced, cooperative and meaningful interaction between the United Nations and civil society.

Mr. Aho-Glele (Benin) (*spoke in French*): My delegation would like to congratulate you, Madam President, on your laudable effort to organize this public debate on a very timely subject: the role of civil society in post-conflict peace-building. We are also pleased to note the participation of many civil society actors and the President of the Economic and Social Council in this debate.

The issues of, inter alia, rebuilding State institutions, promoting democracy, restoring essential services, resuming economic and social life, promoting the return and reintegration of refugees and displaced persons and carrying out disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes for ex-combatants are considerations that led us to engage in this debate on the role of civil society in post-conflict peace-building from the perspective of the country approach and interaction that must be developed between the Security Council and the national scene to lead that process.

The complexity of post-conflict peace-building processes requires a division of labour based on the comparative advantage of the presence of various actors as a way to ensure synergy among various actors of civil society — heterogeneous by nature — and other interested parties. In that context, civil society has its role to play in all areas covered by the peace process, since all the actors and the relations among them constitute the framework of the social and economic life of a given country and thus the well from which nations draw their human resources to build peace and achieve prosperity.

In these conditions, we would emphasize that civil society is a very important interlocutor for achieving peace and establishing peace processes as a whole and in all aspects. Civil society can also effectively play the role of bringing pressure to bear to mobilize social non-violence and ensure good governance by promoting transparency and streamlining the use of public resources.

With regard to humanitarian and social assistance, civil society can help meet the challenge of providing the basic needs of the population, particularly the reintegration of refugees and displaced persons and the rehabilitation of former combatants. In that context, its role can be crucial in identifying needs and in mobilizing national and international solidarity for planning the return and the reintegration of

displaced persons. Civil society can also undertake relief activities with international partners on the ground, to provide emergency assistance to affected populations and ensure support to reinforce social welfare activities, as well as income-generating activities.

The Security Council could expressly stipulate in peacekeeping operations mandates the need for civil society to fully play a role that is commensurate with its potential, as well as the need to ensure that civil society has the assistance necessary to become a truly effective partner in peace processes. That is particularly true for the least developed countries of Africa, where civil society organizations have few opportunities to mobilize resources locally, given their limited means.

We are also of the view that we must strengthen Security Council members' recourse to missions, in follow-up of peacekeeping missions, by sending small Council missions to concerned countries, and thereby encourage greater interaction with civil society on the ground. The objective envisaged would be to gather as much firsthand information as possible to assess as well as possible the progress made and to guide the Council's actions in order to make them as effective as possible.

Holding well-organized local Arria-formula meetings on the ground could contribute to that. That approach should enable a better grasp of analytical elements before embarking on the planning and the implementation of exit strategies of complex peacekeeping operations. It should also allow for better planning between the emergency phase and the stabilization phase strategies in the medium and long terms and facilitate relay and coordination among all facets of the United Nations system.

Civil society should also ensure that national reconciliation be a priority, for example, through truth and reconciliation commissions, which are critical instruments. Civil society has a distinct comparative advantage in that area, particularly through religious organizations whose moral authority can be very important. In order to succeed, national reconciliation efforts must be conducted in a manner removed from all feelings of adversity; rather, they must be conducted in terms of promoting harmony and persuasion to enable people to understand the need for justice and to facilitate victim identification and resource mobilization for their compensation. Thus, the involvement of civil society can be a barometer of the degree of ownership of the peace-building process.

The President: I thank the representative of Benin for the wide-ranging concerns that he has raised that relate to the role of civil society as an effective interlocutor in peace processes.

I should now like to make a statement in my capacity as the Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the Philippines.

Indeed, our discussions could not have come at a more opportune time, as the views expressed here today certainly enrich the elements of the Cardoso report (A/58/817) on United Nations relations with civil society, recently released by the Secretary-General.

I thank Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Marjatta Rasi, President of the Economic and Social Council, for their valuable inputs in today's debate. I also thank Mr. Denis Caillaux of CARE International and Ian Martin of the International Center for Transitional Justice, for their views on the role of civil society in post-conflict peace-building, which clearly reflect their vast experience in this area. I must confess that I am overwhelmed by all the constructive contributions they have given in the consideration of our chosen theme.

Indeed, the wounds of conflict are manifold. They touch upon sensitive roots imbedded in peoples' psyches. The healing process should therefore lead to a recovery of confidence, an assurance of integrity and a deeply internalized sense of peace. This requires a delicate but firm touch moved by an intimate understanding of and sympathy with a people. By its nature, civil society is gifted with such understanding and sympathy.

In efforts to rebuild peace on more enduring foundations, Governments, as well as the United Nations, can be helped by a caring and sharing civil society. Civil society must be compassionate but resolute, helping suffering peoples let go of negative ill feelings, grasp the value of reconciliation, concentrate on reintegration and reconstruction and rehabilitate society through hard work and dedication.

With the help of civil society, Governments and the United Nations should aim to restrengthen the national self-confidence and social fabric of

traumatized peoples and to encourage and to assist them to help themselves overcome enormous human security challenges.

The ruin of factors of production, economic breakdown, and conflict-caused poverty, the collapse of law and order and the exacerbation of long-standing fractiousness must be addressed with professional sobriety.

We are witnesses to the cooperative effort in recent years of national Governments, the United Nations and numerous representatives of civil society in such places as Afghanistan, the Balkans, East Timor and West Africa, to which many members have referred. We are poised to pursue the same cooperative endeavour in Iraq.

The partnership of civil society with the United Nations in post-conflict peace-building can start from the very design of the project blueprint. Civil society can assist in identifying, understanding and addressing root causes of conflict, in helping formulate collaborative reconstruction strategies and perhaps even in resolving conflict itself.

In the actual peace-building phase, civil society can, with United Nations coordination, assist in providing relief, health, education and other public services; spur economic revival and social recovery; promote advocacy of human rights, ethics and the rule of law in catalysing total human development, for it is with such development that a more lasting peace is achieved.

Owing to civil society's grassroots charisma, manifested in its participation in the reconciliation, reconstruction and rehabilitation process — even its mere presence can be therapeutic, a balm to sore wounds — it can evoke a deeper realization of life's worth after the havoc of war. Civil society's participation is therefore vital for public support and, consequently, for the greater legitimacy of peace-building endeavours.

I need not dwell on the elements of cogent strategies, including those for post-conflict peace-building. We all realize that they should be comprehensive in scope and in implementation detail. They must be integrated, recognizing the symbiotic relationship of legal, political, economic, social and cultural concerns. They must be participative, with contributions from all stakeholders, national and international; and they must be flexible, capable of adjustment to changing circumstances and continuing assessment.

There is absolutely no doubt that civil society can help formulate and implement strategies, contributing information, know-how, fervour and even financial and material resources. What is now imperative for the United Nations is to have a clearer view of its relations with a civil society that has grown in size and numbers. Cognizant of its intervention mandate for the maintenance of international peace and security, and profiting from the normative idea of Heifetz and Linsky in their book *Leadership on the Line*, which entails

> "getting on the balcony and stepping back to have a perspective of what is happening while remaining fiercely on the ground",

the United Nations should base its engagement with civil society on policies, mechanisms and procedures that are coherent, consistent and predictable.

Birgitta Dahl, one of the eminent persons tasked by our Secretary-General to consider such engagement, has reported on her Panel's endorsement of four normative paradigms: first, the United Nations role of convening, facilitating and leading partnerships not only of Governments, but also of all stakeholders, including civil society; secondly, country-level focus in analysis and implementation; thirdly, encouragement of greater parliamentary and national standing committee participation; and fourthly, a shift from an omni-governmental bias to a multilateral society mobilizing the cooperation of coalitions of the willing, following the "highest common principles".

These paradigms deserve serious attention, not only for the involvement of civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders in post-conflict peace-building, but also for their involvement in other issues of global concern.

Let me interject at this point a notion that is by no means new, but deserves keener appreciation: the role of faith groups, as civil society actors, in conflict prevention and post-conflict peace-building. Religions do preach peace, not violence; forgiveness, not revenge. Upholding human dignity, justice, accountability and the rule of law, they exercise a strong moral influence. Based on in-depth appreciation of problems, their inputs to conflict-prevention and

post-conflict peace-building plans and implementation should be optimized.

Clearly, as we have heard today, there is a consensus on the crucial role of civil society in global issues. The Secretary-General's report to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly should spur bold and pragmatic action, for it provides us with the mechanics of accreditation, the procedures of consultation, the equilibrium of North-South actors and of stakeholders with differing views, the sharing of costs, and similar practical matters that impact on good order. The delineation of roles and a sound respect for leadership and coordination must be present. This leadership and coordination are expected of us in the United Nations.

The Philippines looks forward to a meaningful outcome of the Secretary-General's initiative of convening an international NGO conference in 2005 on the role of civil society in the prevention of armed conflict. We believe that this dialogue will further crystallize the partnership of the United Nations, civil society and other stakeholders, including the religious sector, particularly in post-conflict peace-building. When conflict ends, healing must begin, and civil society, Government and the United Nations must stand together, bravely, past the frontiers of conflict.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. I intend, with the concurrence of members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

The meeting was suspended at 1.30 p.m.